

Chapter 4: Francis and Nancy Norris Redding

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Profile of Francis and Nancy Norris Redding

Francis Redding was born in Wake County, North Carolina, in 1798. He apparently moved to Tennessee with his father about 1811, but married Nancy Norris in Lexington, Missouri, in 1818, the year his father moved to Illinois. Nancy Norris was the daughter of David Norris and Mary Barker, born in South Carolina in 1794, and came from a long line of mariners and frontiersmen.

By 1824, Francis was back in Illinois near his father in Morgan County. In 1830 he owned 160 acres in Schuyler (now McDonnough) County, where he was elected a constable. In 1834 Francis sold the farm in Illinois and moved into the territory across the river near Burlington, Iowa. In 1838, Francis Redding was a member of the Des Moines County board of directors, as recorded in the county history, and in 1839 he was named to the board of the newly founded Augusta Academy.

In 1850 Francis farmed 210 acres in Iowa, with livestock and crops. Francis Redding moved his family to Missouri (or the Missouri-Iowa borderland between Wayne County, Iowa and Putnam County, Iowa) about 1856. The Reddings and their kin owned small farms on both sides of the Iowa-Missouri border, and a descendent in Missouri says they grew orchards.

Francis died on March 15, 1877 in Putnam County, Missouri (just south of the Iowa border), and was buried in Union Church Cemetery near Unionville. Nancy died on January 10, 1894, shortly after the local newspaper reported that she was 100 years old, and was buried next to Francis in the Union Church Cemetery near Unionville, within sight of the Iowa border.

Francis and Nancy were the parents of: Melinda Redding Gregg, Melissa Redding Shepherd, John B., James, and Sarah M. Redding Berrier. He also raised Sarah N. Redding King, his niece for whom he became guardian upon his brother Jacob's death in 1845.

Chapter 4: Francis and Nancy Norris Redding

From North Carolina to Missouri to Illinois

Francis Redding, born in North Carolina on May 14, 1798, was a son of James and Susannah Crocker Redding. Francis married Nancy Norris in Lexington, Missouri, in August of 1818. Nancy Norris, born November 18, 1793 in South Carolina, is believed to be the daughter of David and Mary Barker Norris.

In 1818, Lexington, Missouri, was a frontier town on the Missouri River east of Independence. Nancy Norris no doubt made the trek from Tennessee to the fringe of the frontier in Western Missouri with her family, traveling perhaps by river and then trail. Francis and Nancy may have met in White County, Tennessee, and Francis followed the Norrises to Missouri.

In 1818 James Redding, Jr. claimed land in the military tract in Pike County, Illinois, and Francis's father settled in Madison County, Illinois, moving later to Morgan County. Francis and Nancy were married in 1818. Francis and Nancy settled in Illinois sometime before 1826 (and probably after the tax roles of 1824, also when Melissa was born in Missouri), where they resided in Morgan County (Jacksonville is in Morgan County—this is west-central Illinois).

An interesting coincidence, or a mystery yet to be solved, is that a Francis Redding enlisted in the army in South Carolina in 1814 and was discharged in 1819 from Fort Osage, very near where our Francis married Nancy in 1818. We believe this Francis was a cousin of our Francis, the son of Sanders Redding.

An old Indian trail, the Osage Trace, ran from Fort Osage to Lexington, where transport could be found on the Missouri River. Francis Redding, probable son of Sanders, enlisted in the army in Lancaster, South Carolina, on August 9, 1814. He was a farmer, 5'7", blue eyes, fair hair and complexion. He served as a private in the United States Rifle Regiment with Captains Robert Campbell, Stoughton Gantt, James McGunnege, and Benjamin Birdsall. He was at Fort Belle Fontaine near St. Louis, Missouri, from 1815 to 1819. Soldiers from Ft. Belle Fontaine helped provide security for the great Indian council at Portage Des Sioux in July 1815. Representatives of the Delawares, Iowas, Kansas, Kickapoos, Omahas, Osages, Sioux, Piankeshaws, Pottawatamies, Shawnees, and a band of the Sac-Fox under Chief Keokuk took part in the peace negotiations. U.S. representatives included, Gov. William Clark, Auguste Chouteau, Gov. Edwards of Illinois, and Robert Walsh. Security consisted of 275 U.S. Army regulars and two gunboats. In the meantime, at Ft. Belle Fontaine, the War Department called up the local mounted militia to be prepared at a moment's notice to reinforce the Army. Francis moved from Fort Belle Fontaine to Fort Osage, near what is now Kansas City, sometime in 1819, where he was discharged on August 9, 1819, five years to the day from his enlistment date. The army enlistment records report that Francis was born in 1794. Francis was granted 160 acres of bounty land in Arkansas for his service as a musician with Captain James McGunnege, and he claimed the land on February 6, 1823.

Note: In 1810 Sanders Reading was in Lancaster, South Carolina. Lancaster is where Francis Redding (b. 1794-98) enlisted in 1814.

By 1826, Francis and family were in Morgan County, Illinois, where son John B. was born. By 1830 Francis Redding was in McDonough County, on a farm about three miles east of Blandinsville. McDonough County was formed in 1826, but its judicial and recording functions were maintained in Schuyler County, where Francis Redding appears in the 1830 census.



Francis and Nancy Redding.

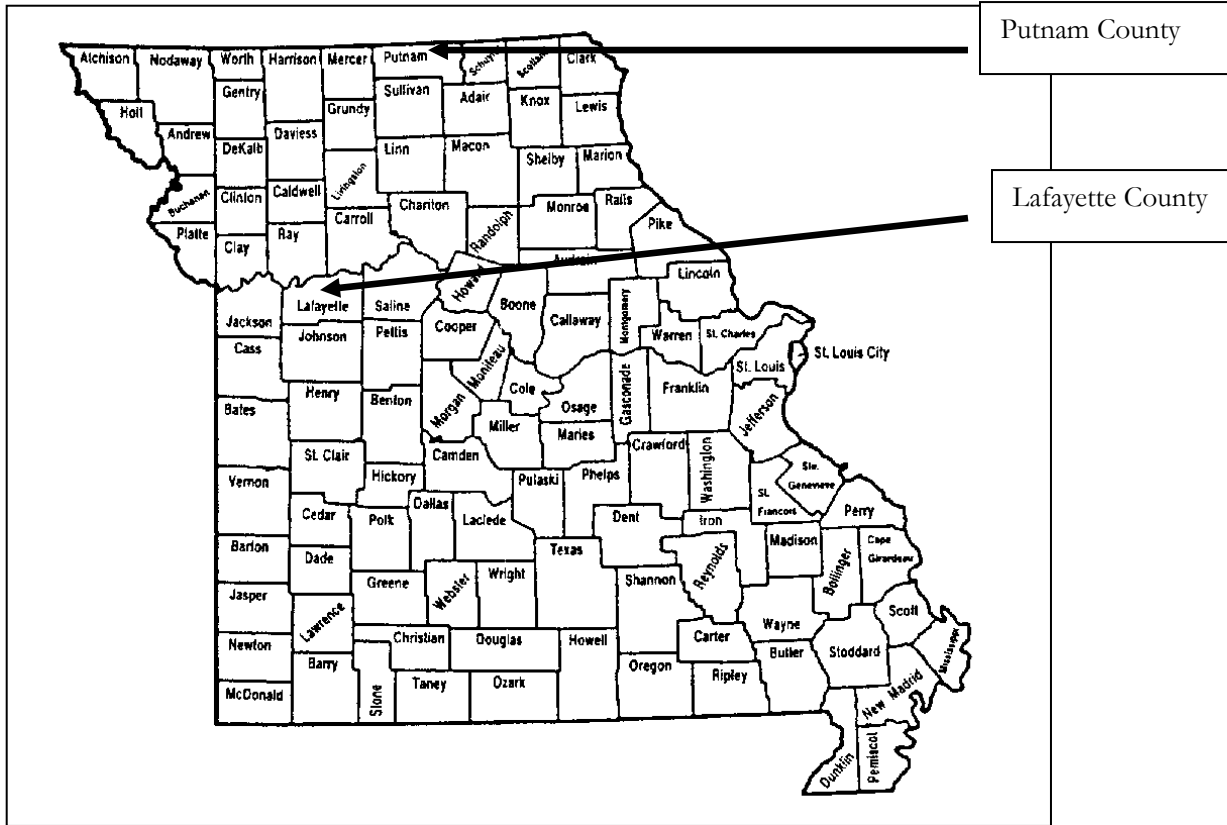
In the 1830 Illinois Census, Francis (Redding) was in Schuyler County (now McDonough County, near Blandinsville) (7N4W) with two males under 5 (John B., and James), one male 30 to 40 (Francis), one female 5 to 10 (Malissa), one female 10 to 20 (Melinda), and a female 30 to 40 (Nancy). Francis's parents, James (Reding) and Susannah, and their grandson, Andrew Leonard, were also in the Schuyler census in 1830, in a separate household in 6N4W, next to John Wyatt (Wiat).

The McDonough County history tells what life was like in 1830. "In 1830, Indians were still frequent visitors to the cabins of the white man. It was in the fall of 1830 that a large number of the tribe of Fox or Sac Indians encamped on the creek just west of Macomb for the purpose of engaging in their annual fall hunt, when a few of the brave settlers went out and ordered them away, and in order to hasten their departure, caught a few of them, and while some of their number kept guard, Resin Naylor, with a hickory wither, gave them thirty and nine lashes upon their bare backs. In doing this the settlers ran a great risk, for the

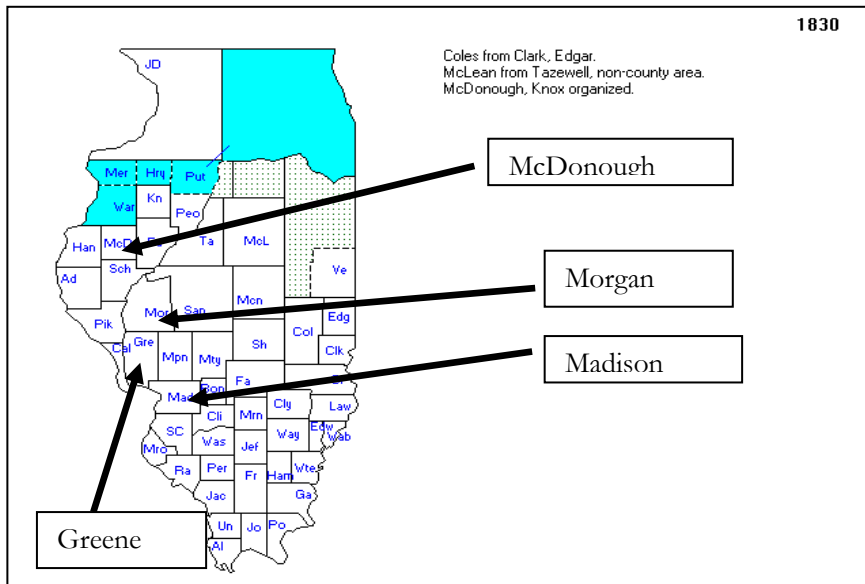
Indians were well armed, while the whites had only a few old flintlock muskets, the most of which were too rusty to be of any service. Luckily no resistance was made, and the Indians hastily left." In 1830, the area finally counted a sufficient number of inhabitants to organize itself as a county and elect officials.

In 1830, Francis Redding purchased for \$75 from David Trainer 160 acres in SW quarter of section 34, Meridian 4, in Blandinsville Township. Francis was elected a constable, as recorded in the early history of the county. "At the special election, held August 7 [1830], in the several Magistrate's Districts, James Vance, Sr., and John Billew were elected Justices of the Peace, and James Lee and James B. Tomberlin, Constables in and for the First District. In the Second District were elected James Clarke, William McDonald, Robert Cook and Samuel Bogart, Justices of the Peace, and John Wilson, Oliver C. Rice, Thomas J. Pennington, and John Harris, Constables. In the Third District Ephraim Perkins and Caswell Russell were elected Justices of the Peace, and **Francis Reading** and Jacob Coffman, Constables." The McDonough County history further describes the early settlement of the area: "The first settlement of McDonough county of which we have record was in the spring of 1826. Previous to this time the county was in a state of unbroken wildness, the home of red men, who roamed at will over its broad prairies, engaged in occupations peculiar to their race. No one, save the old settler, or one who has visited the far West, can fully realize the beauty of the country at that time. Dividing the county centrally north and south, we had upon the east a broad prairie extending as far as the eye could reach, the tall grass gently undulating like the waves of the sea, while upon the west the giant oak, the stately elm, and the useful hickory seemingly pierced the very heavens, and stood as faithful sentinels over their entire surroundings. No fallen timber or undergrowth of any kind obstructed the passage, the annual prairie fire making a clean path for all. A prairie on fire! Have you ever witnessed one? The sight is a magnificent one indeed."

Map of Missouri



Map of Illinois



Francis and Nancy Redding in Iowa

In 1834, Francis sold his 160 acres in Illinois to Perry Langford for \$575 and moved to Augusta Township, Des Moines County, Iowa Territory (near Burlington), an area that had just been secured from Chief Black Hawk. In fact, Des Moines County was established in 1834, with Burlington as the county seat, and then embraced nearly one-half of the territory of the future State of Iowa. But in December, 1836, the counties of Lee, Van Buren, Henry, Louisa, Muscatine and Cook were created from territory within its limits. Des Moines County was named for the Des Moines River and in January, 1838, was reduced to nearly its present boundaries, lying on the Mississippi River in the second tier north of the Missouri State line.

After the Black Hawk War, Iowa was officially opened to settlers on June 1, 1833. Settlers waited for the sun to rise so they could cross the Mississippi and dash to their new land and stake a claim. These early settlers had only squatters rights to the land. The land was not surveyed until 1836 and land sales did not begin until 1838. Squatters risked losing their land to someone else who secured it by purchase. The government sold this public land for \$1.25 an acre. In addition to the purchases, various acts of Congress granted bounty land to military veterans. In Iowa, more than 14 million acres were purchased with military warrants over a 40 year period.

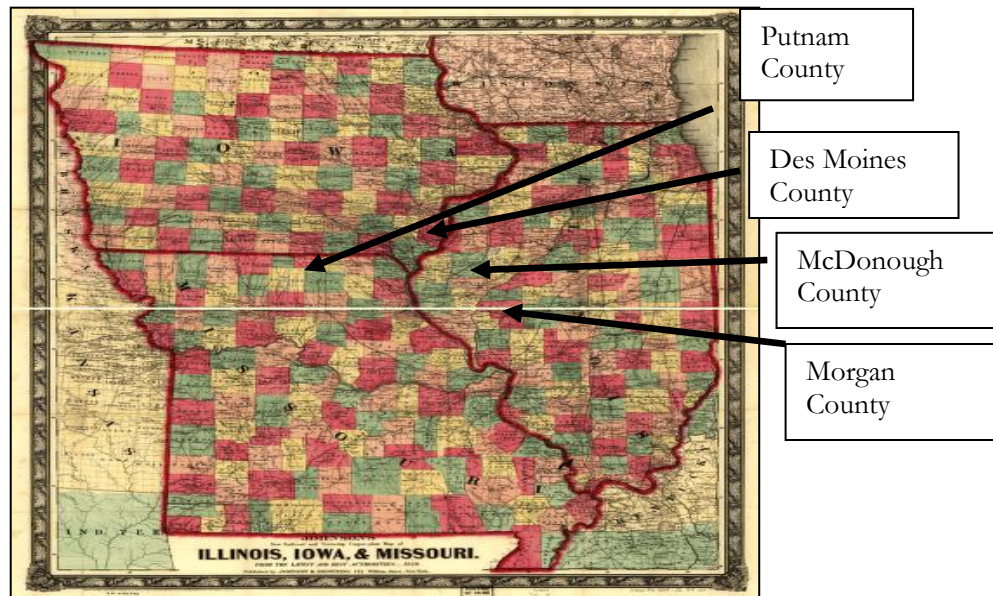
In the 1836 Iowa Territorial Census, Francis Redin is listed in Des Moines County with 2 males over 21 (Francis and his father, James), 2 males under 21 (John B. and James), 2 females over 21 (Nancy and Susannah), 2 females under 21 (Melissa and Sarah M.). [Note: Melinda married in 1836.] Francis remains in Des Moines County in the 1840 census (township 64 N range 4 W), with 2 males 10-15 (John B. and James), 1 male 40-50 (Francis), 1 female 5-10 (Sarah M.), 1 female 15-20 (Melissa), and one female 40-50 (Nancy). Francis's parents are no longer in his household. By this time, his father, James, has probably died, as his will was prepared in 1839. We do not find Francis's mother Susannah either in the home of Francis or his brother James or nephew Andrew Leonard in Des Moines County or his sister, Polly Wyatt, in nearby Jefferson County in the 1840 census. James, Jr. is in the same township and range as Francis, as are Azariah Gregg, Andrew Leonard, and two Deardorffs.

In 1838, Francis Redding was a member of the Des Moines County board of directors, as recorded in the county history, and in 1839 he was named to the board of the newly founded Augusta Academy, a seminary of learning in science and literature for the youths of both sexes, located in the town of Augusta, a school that succeeded the first school in the township, taught by Alexander Hilleary in a log schoolhouse from 1836 to 1839. There was at that time no public school in the county.

In 1850, Francis is in Union Township, Des Moines County, and is listed as 51 years old, a farmer, born in North Carolina, with real property worth \$2,000. Nancy's age is given as 49 and she was born in North Carolina (both age and place of birth are inconsistent with other accounts). Also in the household with Francis and Nancy were their son John B., his bride, Mary, an unknown John Redding with no age, and a Charles Thomas, born in Ohio, possibly a boarder. Francis and John B. were both farmers. In 1852, Francis is in Augusta Township in the state census.

In an 1850 agricultural survey, Francis Redding was in Union Township, Des Moines County, with 90 improved acres and 120 unimproved acres, with a total value of \$2,000. He had 5 horses, 3 mules, 7 cattle, 7 sheep, 60 hogs. That year he had produced 140 bushels of wheat, 600 bushels of corn, 100 bushels of oats, 30 pounds of wool, 220 pounds of butter, and 4 tons of hay.

Map of Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri



Francis and Nancy Redding in Missouri

In March of 1856, Catherine Berrier McClure wrote from Iowa to her uncle Jacob Berrier in North Carolina. Her sister Mary was married to James Redding, son of Francis and Nancy. Catherine wrote:

I tak my pen in hand to inform you that we are all well at present hoping that these fu lines will find you in same helth and fathers famley are all well. James Redding moved last fall to Missuria and got him a peas of lan and we got a letter from him and he seas that he lik it. Mary sais tha ar hartyr than tha war here. The old man Redding [Francis] has sold out and is going to Missurria to and Philip is going to but tha ar not going to the sam contry that Susan is. It is about twenty four miles from James Redding [Francis's brother] to wher Susan and her man is going. Susan father in law is going to. Tha will rol out in the spring and I must tell you that we sold our land wher we war living when you wous her to see us and went down close to father and bout the old man Grubb place close to Alexander Grubb and we bilt a fraim house on it and we hav moved on it. Thar is for roomes in it.

In the 1856 Des Moines County census, Catherine McClure is 34 years old, born in North Carolina, and married to David McClure, who was born in Ohio. Her parents, David and Anna Berrier, are 55 and 49, and both born in North Carolina. Several Grubbs are listed, also with North Carolina roots.

Francis Redding moved his family to Missouri (or the Missouri-Iowa borderland between Wayne County, Iowa and Putnam County, Iowa) about 1856, and in the 1860 census was in the household of his son-in-law John Shepherd in Wayne County, Iowa, age 63 and a farmer, with Nancy, also 63. Francis was born in North Carolina and Nancy in South Carolina. Francis is erroneously listed as Thomas in this census. Francis's personal estate was listed as \$3,000 and John Shepherd's as \$1,232, but John had \$5,600 in real estate and Francis none. Francis's son John B. Redding had followed him to Missouri, as he is found in the 1860 census in Unionville, Putnam County.

In the 1870 Iowa Census, Francis Redding is in Monroe Township, Wayne County (Genoa), Iowa, age 72, farmer, born in North Carolina, with wife Nancy, age 71, born in South Carolina. He now has \$300 in real

estate and \$1,825 in personal property. The Reddings and their kin owned small farms on both sides of the Iowa-Missouri border, and a descendent in Missouri says they grew orchards. Because Francis Redding and his son John B. Redding were among the few literate males in this time and place, their names appear as witnesses on many legal documents. Francis died on March 15, 1877 in Putnam County, Missouri (just south of the Iowa border), and was buried in Union Church Cemetery near Unionville.

In the 1880 Iowa census, Nancy Redding was living in the home of Phillip Berrier, her son-in-law, in Jefferson County, Iowa, age 83, born in South Carolina, her parents born in Georgia. On February 9, 1880, Nancy sold 20 acres in Putnam County (south half of the east half of lot one (1) of the north east quarter of section three (3) in township sixty six (66), range twenty (20)) to Joseph Scott of Putnam County. The deed was filed for record in Jefferson County, Iowa. Philip Berrier witnessed, and Nancy made her mark.

Nancy died on January 10, 1894, and was buried next to Francis in the Union Church Cemetery near Unionville, within sight of the Iowa border. Her claim to have been 100 years old is disputed by census records which indicate that she was born about 1796-99 rather than 1793. But maybe she claimed to be younger in the census but enjoyed the attention of being a 100-year-old near her death. The following obituary appeared in the Putnam County Leader on Friday Morning, January 12, 1894.

Mrs. Nancy Redding, a very aged and highly respected lady, died at the home of her niece, Mrs. John Duvalt [actually this was probably Anna Davolt, daughter of John B. Redding, and thus Nancy's granddaughter], in this city [Unionville] Wednesday night. Deceased was born in Saluda county, South Carolina, November 18, 1793, and was a resident of Putnam county from 1856. She was the mother of John B. Redding who resides near the city. She was 100 years, 1 month and 22 days old at her death. The remains will be taken to the Union church cemetery in Sherman township, today for burial.

Article in Unionville, Missouri, Newspaper Upon Death of Nancy Norris Redding, January 10, 1894

OVER ONE HUNDRED

Mrs. Nancy Redding Died on Wednesday Last, Aged 100 Years, 1 Month and 22 Days

On Wednesday last, Jan. 10th, the spirit of Mrs. Nancy Redding took its flight. Deceased had been indisposed for a year past, and her demise was not a surprise.

Nancy Norris was born in Saluda Co. [actually Saluda River, Greenville County], South Carolina, Nov. 18, 1793. From there she moved to White County, North Carolina [Tennessee], when quite young. In 1818, with her parents, she came West, arriving at Lexington, Mo., in June. The following August she was united in marriage to Francis Redding. To them were born eight children, prominent among whom is John B. Redding, and with whom the subject of this sketch has been living. There are thirty-one grand children, eighty great grand children and three great great grand children. Mr. and Mrs. Redding have resided within ten miles of this city since 1855. On March 15, 1877, Mr. Redding died, and his remains are resting in the Union Church cemetery, ten miles north and west of this city. Until quite recently Mrs. Redding has retained her faculties remarkably well, and had a vivid recollection of the war of 1812, in which her father and other relatives were active participants. She was a member of the Christian Church, with which organization she had been identified since she was eighteen years of age. Her remains were taken to the Union Church cemetery and consigned to rest with those of her husband, who preceded her.

Eld. E. J. McKinley, of the Christian Church, conducted the services, which were attended by a large concourse of people.

Children of Francis and Nancy Redding

[In addition to the children of Francis and Nancy listed below, some researchers list Lorenzo Redding who married Lydia Arnold as a son (other sources say Lorenzo was the son of Nathaniel Redding of Indiana); Elizabeth who married Joseph Deardorff (we think Elizabeth was the daughter of Francis's brother James, Jr.); and Charles Thomas (born 1830 who appears in the household in one census but who we believe to be a hired man living in the household).]

The article in the Unionville, Missouri, newspaper about Nancy Norris Redding, said that she and Francis were the parents of eight children. Five children are known, and perhaps others died in infancy. A stone near Nancy's grave is thought to mark the burial of a son who died between 1854 and 1860. Also, the family Bible of Sarah M. Redding Berrier shows a David N. (Norris?) Redding deceased January 21, 1840. This David could have been born after the 1830 census.

Melinda

Melinda Redding was born July 29, 1819, probably in Missouri.

In the Portrait & Biographical Album of Des Moines County, Iowa, published in 1888, the following appears in a section on "Family History of Azariah Gregg":

Francis Reading, with his family, became a residence of Augusta Township in 1834, coming from Illinois, and previously from Missouri where he was married to Nancy Reading, whose maternal grandsire lived to the extreme age of 110. Settling near the claim of our subject [Azariah Gregg], in 1836 the daughter, Melinda, became the wife of Azariah Gregg. The young wife or our subject was duly installed mistress of the log cabin near the woods, where for more than a half century its walls have stood and the ruins yet remain. Children are: Sarah now wife of John W. Moore; Nancy C. now Mrs. Alex Lockhart; and Virgil A who married Adelia Mills. On the old homestead the wife and mother died in 1848. Mr. Gregg married Mrs. Mary F. (Bonman) Allison and they have 3 children.

The History of Des Moines County, Iowa, published in 1879, reported the following:

A. Gregg was born in Ohio County, Virginia, February 2, 1810 and moved to Des Moines County November 12, 1834 and settled in Augusta Township. He married Miss Frances [sic] Redding January 24, 1836. She was born in Illinois July 29, 1819 and died June 10, 1848. He then married Mrs. Mary F. Allison December 25, 1866; she was born June 21, 1833 in Wayne County, Ohio.

Melissa

Melissa Redding was born in Missouri in 1824 [Censuses of 1850 and 1860 give her state of birth as Missouri] and married John E. Shepherd in her father's home in Des Moines County, Iowa on March 3, 1846. John Shepherd was born in 1824 in Virginia. Children of John and Melissa were: Benjamin (1848); Malinda (1850); Nancy (1852); Mary (1854); Robert (1855); and Sarah (1858).

John B.

John B. Redding was born in Morgan County, Illinois on March 15, 1826. He married Mary Ann Gilliland in Des Moines County, Iowa, on February 7, 1850, and he died on December 12, 1904 in Putnam County, Missouri. See next chapter on John B. Redding.

James

James Redding was born in May of 1828 in Morgan County, Illinois. He married Mary Berrier (born Davidson County, North Carolina, November 12, 1828) in Des Moines County, Iowa, on August 12, 1847. They were married at the home of Mary's father, David, on the same day as Catherine Berrier and Robert McClure. In the 1860 census in Putnam County, Missouri, James 33, a farmer born in Illinois, with his wife Mary, 30, born in North Carolina, and their children David, 13, Phillip, 11, Melinda, 10, and Urias, 2. All the children were born in Iowa except Urias, who was born in Missouri. Mary Berrier Redding died March 29, 1864 in Genoa, Wayne County, Iowa. James remarried to Eliza Agnes Waggoner Butler (born May 1839 in Mason County, Virginia) on August 18, 1864.

Sarah M.

Sarah M. Redding was born February 22, 1835 in Des Moines County, Iowa. She married Phillip Berrier (born April 1, 1827 in Davidson County, NC, son of David and Anna Marie Long Berrier, brother of Mary) on December 15, 1852 in Des Moines County, Iowa. Their children were: Henry A. Berrier, born in Putnam County, Missouri, March 16, 1859; and Julia A. Berrier, born in Des Moines County, Iowa, June 6, 1866. In 1880, they were in Jefferson County, Iowa, he 52 and she 45. He was a farmer, born in North Carolina as were his parents. She was born in Iowa, her father in North Carolina and her mother in South Carolina.. Henry was 22 and Julia 13. Also in the household was Sarah's mother, Nancy Redding, age 83, born in South Carolina, both parents born in Georgia.

Sarah N.

Sarah N. Redding was the daughter of Jacob Redding, Francis Redding's brother. She was born September 21, 1838 in Morgan County, Illinois, and died July 12, 1879 in Genoa, Wayne County, Iowa. She married Rufus King. When her father, Jacob, died in Morgan County, Illinois in 1845, and Sarah's first guardian subsequently died, Francis assumed guardianship of Sarah. The court decree read:

GUARDIAN FOR SARAH N. REDDING, DAUGHTER OF JACOB REDDING

Sarah N. Redding being over 14 makes her own choice that Francis Redding be appointed in guardian. She is a minor and heir at law of Jacob Redding.

Filed 9 August 1855

To the County Judge of Des Moines County and the State of Iowa: Sir I hereby say to you that I Sarah N. Redding daughter of Jacob Redding deceased of Morgan County Illinois that I am of lawful age and my Uncle Francis Redding Guardian has delivered to me personally and to my satisfaction all money that he received from my former Guardian of Morgan County State of Illinois. Signed Sarah N. Redding

Filed 20 April 1857

In 1870, Rufus and Sarah were in Monroe Township, Wayne County, Iowa. He was 35, born in New York, and a farmer. She was 32, born in Illinois. Their children were: Francis, 9; Elizabeth, 7; Nancy, 4; Sarah, 3; John, 1. The children were all born in Iowa.

The Norris Family